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ABSTRACT

This paper indicates eight problems faced by the teaching teams at Fremont Junior High School, including insufficient planning, lack of trust and openness, lack of correlation within the teams, inadequate assessment of pupil needs, insufficient change in teacher behavior, uneven level of total staff commitment toward the school, self-contained classrooms functioning within the open space concept, and manifestation by students of staff frustration. Characteristics or conditions which would indicate successful elimination of these problems are listed. A questionnaire that would guide an analysis of team effectiveness is included. (MJM)

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ARIZONA-MESA DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING CONSORTIUM

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Analyzing Teacher Team Effectiveness

The Team Tutorial Approach: A Model

by

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INTRODUCTION - WHY THIS PAPER?

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After some months of continuing study, reflection, talk and initiating several programs at Fremont, it became apparent that our teaching teams were still not functioning as well as they might.

In fact, a stronger statement that is closer to my feelings is "our teams are not working well." In a continuing discussion with the staff, individual staff members, Jerry Melton and the differentiated staffing project, I was forced to be specific. This paper is a result of an attempt to assess our personnel working effectiveness, and offer a vehicle for analysis and direction finding. It sets forth as well as we are able, an ideal which has been personally experienced over a number of years.

In order to make any sense of "our teams are not working well," it was necessary to define what was meant. I feel the following items indicate what is meant by the statement.

1. The teaching teams are not planning well enough;
2. There is a lack of complete trust and openness between members of teams;
3. There is not close enough correlation within the teams on such items as student grouping;
4. The teams have not adequately assessed pupil needs;
5. If the teams have assessed pupil needs, there is not much evidence of a change in teacher behavior;
6. There is still a very uneven level of total staff commitment towards the school;

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7. In some cases we have self-contained classrooms functioning within the "open space" concept which is an anachronism; and

8. The students are manifesting staff frustration with the above problems.

In several pages, a procedure is outlined by which I hope to further expand upon these dimensions and to offer a means by which we can assess ourselves and perhaps move towards an alternative.

Gail Pew
Principal
Fremont Junior High School

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HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED?

Many problems are not solved because they fail to be defined in such a manner as to indicate when they are solved. In order to provide more concrete insights into the statement of the problem, it was necessary for me to expand upon the eight problem indicators previously presented. I had to state what I felt would be the behavioral changes that each of the eight indicators would undergo, or not be like in some cases, in order to list the conditions which would mean we had solved the problem. I hope the staff will add to this list, because it is certainly not complete at this point.

Problem Indicator I: The teaching teams are not planning well enough. Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that good team planning was going on or that this manifestation of the problem was solved:

1. Teachers would know what each of the members were doing in large group, small group, tutorial, etc. There would be no surprises from day to day as for example one teacher being surprised that the other was showing a film when he had planned to use the same room for another activity.

2. There would be total team input in contrast to the domination of the input by one or two teachers on a team. Teachers would not complain that their feelings were not accepted or that they were reluctant to express themselves during planning when responsibilities were divided up.

3. There would be greater awareness by teachers of the need for more teacher/teacher, and teacher/pupil dialogue. There would be more meaningful verbal interaction at both levels than is now occurring.

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4. There would be more staff cohesivenss within the discipline teams. By cohesiveness I mean a more articulated curriculum for children in the area involved.

Problem Indicator II: There is a lack of trust between team members.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that there was sufficient openness and trust between team members:

1. Team members would openly display a feeling of confidence in the ability of the team and everybody's ideas would really be considered in the team decision-making process. There would be no "hidden" agendas and a diminishing amount of non-verbal behavior in meetings which indicated a lack of commitment, disinterest or hostility towards each other.

2. There would not be feedback by teachers to one another of unhappiness over assignments, lack of credentials and qualifications in accepting assignments, or that their real feelings were not expressed or not accepted by others.

3. Teachers would not be unduly suspicious of pupil motives and behavior which acts as a reinforcer for bad pupil behavior because teachers don't essentially trust each other.

Problem Indicator III: There is not close enough correlation within the teams on such items as student grouping.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that there was good intra-team correlation as it relates to student grouping:

1. Pupils who have been grouped on some criteria into like groups would still be functioning under an overall, articulated curriculum umbrella. Thus, there would not be the problem of pupils or teachers with low groups feeling isolated from the rest of the pupils and teachers.

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Problem Indicator IV: The teams have not adequately assessed pupil needs.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that there had been an adequate assessment of pupil needs:

1. The instructional program in a discipline area would not be designed prior to assessing pupil needs; the program would fit the student and not the other way around.

2. A lack of artificial routine on the part of the way teachers design and implement an instructional program; that is, too much emphasis on following a logical presentation via text-book chapters or topics, rather than in assessing pupil needs and constructing learning experiences based upon those needs; not using pupil needs as the central focus for determining instructional sequencing and pacing.

Problem Indicator V: If the teams have assessed pupil needs, there is not much evidence of a change in teacher behavior.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that there had been a change in teacher behavior as a result of needs assessment.

1. The program would follow the assessment and there would be a design for systematically sampling pupil attitudes and using it as a major input in determining teaching.

2. A variety of instructional modes would be present and obvious.

3. Groups would not be of a permanent nature; they would be continually grouped and re-grouped on the basis of reach achievement.

4. Pupils would have a direct say in much of what they learned.

5. More pupil diversity of response and participation would be encouraged.

6. There would be more utilization of various types of instructional resources.

7. There would be more chances provided for students to exploit learning resources, including the teacher as a resource.

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8. Pupil success would be emphasized more on a regular, planned basis. Teaching would begin where students actually were, and not where they were presumed to be.

9. Teacher behavior would not be so much aimed at producing convergent thinking as divergence and creative responses on the part of students.

10. Assessment of pupil growth in all areas would occur regularly and periodically on a planned basis by the team. This then forms the data base for the next unit planning.

Problem Indicator VI: There is a very uneven level of total staff commitment towards the school.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that the staff was totally committed.

1. Placing the good of the school and its beliefs, ideas, and directions above personal agenda items.

2. A majority of the staff can agree and move as a total body on most things.

3. There is not a lot of faculty cliques, splinter groups, or isolates.

4. There is good evidence of faculty esprit de corps.

5. There is a lack of petty complaints regarding each other.

6. There is exhibited a good ability to share and cooperate with each other and between teams and departments when limited resources are involved.

7. There is the presentation of a "unified front" when the school as a totality is involved in activities.

8. There is a high degree of teacher sharing and intra-staff feedback.

9. There is an "even load" commitment within teams, a few don't always get stuck with most of the work most of the time.

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Problem Indicator VII: There is open space but self-contained classrooms are functioning within it.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that there was good utilization of the open space concept at Fremont.

1. There would be no permanent single-teacher-per-class organization on a permanent basis over an extended period of time within the open space.
2. There would be group flexibility and teacher assignment flexibility within the open space.
3. There would be stress by teachers on group fluidity with purpose, many varied experiences for students.
4. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide rather than full-time director or lecturer.
5. The role of pupils in open space is active, involved and direct. The role of teacher is that of guide and shaper of activities and resources towards pupil needs.

Problem Indicator VIII: Students are mirroring staff frustration with the aforementioned indicators.

Characteristics or conditions which would indicate that Fremont students were productive and learning:

1. Students exhibit a high degree of motivation for learning.
2. Staff/student conflict rates are very low.
3. There is a low degree of pupil vandalism and disrespect for staff.
4. There is a low degree of pupil intolerance towards each other.
5. There is a high degree of students' perception of self-worth.
6. There is generally a low amount of pupil absenteeism and class-cutting.

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7. There is a low amount of non-productive student behavior.

8. Generally, pupils express the feeling that teachers are not "up tight" and are fair in dealing with them.

A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR TEAMWORK
THE TEAM TUTORIAL APPROACH

Situational Givens

1. It is assumed that "team" means a collection of individuals who work together; work defined as planning, implementing, and evaluating together;

2. The team tutorial approach is ultimately aimed at individual students, through the resources of the team;

3. The team has complete confidence in each other and in the collective ability of the team to carry off their responsibilities;

4. An open climate where trust between people is marked by an honest and frank interchange of ideas, where personalities and the emotional feeling are not buried, but recognized and dealt with above the table.

Operational Procedures

1. A leader is elected, appointed, selected or emerges.

2. The leader sets out the responsibilities of the group.

3. The leader delineates the objectives of the group and secures consensus on the objectives.

4. The leader develops objectives for meetings which are aimed at making closure on the major activities necessary for the group to realize its total objectives.

5. A division of responsibility is established whereby each member can participate to his maximum potential and charged with completing a number of activities. Responsibilities are fixed on a definite time table.

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6. The group meets daily to check progress and share problems; Once a week the meeting is extended.

7. The team utilizes many modes of evaluation to assess their effectiveness; regular meetings scrutinize their successes and/or failures. Every effort is made to provide for the most immediate type of feedback possible. For example student evaluative data, administrative evaluation, parent feedback, peers, etc. Each mode is considered legitimate, though offered from varying points of view and background.

8. Students are the ends of the team, not a means to an end. The team begins with students where they are and reinforces positive student behavior, however small or seemingly insignificant. Success rather than failure is reinforced.

9. Constant and genuine concern for pupil progress which is visible to pupils, not as anxiety, but as caring behavior on the part of the teachers involved - the CQ (caring quotient).

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FREMONT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
ANALYZING YOUR TEAM'S EFFECTIVENESS
INDIVIDUAL PROFILE OF TEAM

_____
TEAM

DIRECTIONS: On each of the criteria below, rate your team as to its current effectiveness. Make one mark for each characteristic.

AREA	RATING				
	STRONG	ABOVE AVG	AVG	BELOW AVG	WEAK
1. The "team" works together in all phases of planning, implementing and evaluating their program.	_____	_____	____	_____	____
2. The efforts of the "team" can be seen in pupil growth and motivation.	_____	_____	____	_____	____
3. The team has complete confidence in each other and in their collective ability to carry off their work assignments.	_____	_____	____	_____	____
4. An open climate prevails marked by an open and frank dialogue, there is a lack of "hidden" agendas.	_____	_____	____	_____	____
5. The team has a strong leader who is recognized by others on the team.	_____	_____	____	_____	____

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AREA	RATING				
	STRONG	ABOVE AVG	AVG	BELOW AVG	WEAK
6. The leader sets out clearly the responsibilities of the group.	____	____	____	____	____
7. The leader secures consensus of the group on their objectives.	____	____	____	____	____
8. The team leader develops meeting objectives which are clearly understood by all members.	____	____	____	____	____
9. A clear division of responsibility has been established where duties are fixed on a time table.	____	____	____	____	____
10. The group meets daily to check on progress.	____	____	____	____	____
11. The team utilizes many modes to evaluate their effectiveness. All data sources are utilized.	____	____	____	____	____
12. The team reinforces positive student behavior.	____	____	____	____	____
13. Teacher caring for pupils is genuine and visible.	____	____	____	____	____
TOTALS	____	____	____	____	____

PROFILING YOUR TEAM'S EFFECTIVENESS

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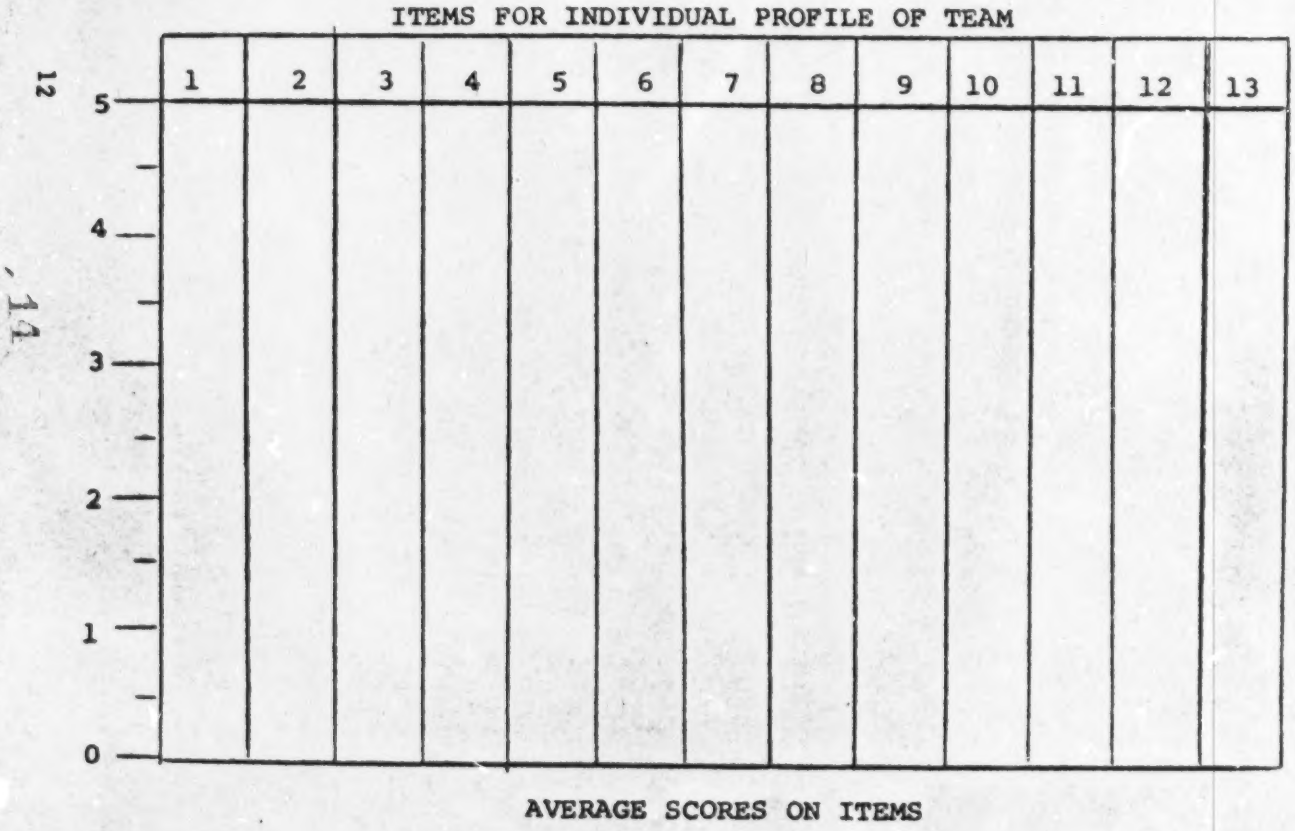
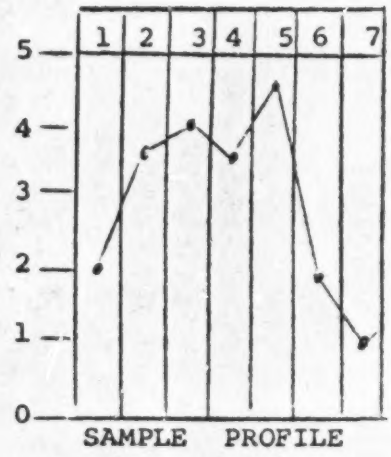
TEAM HISTOGRAM

DIRECTIONS: Compute on the profile the average score for each item corresponding to the Individual Profile sheet by computing all scores on an individual item, then dividing by the number of responses. This will provide an overall team profile computed on the basis of individual responses.





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PROCEDURES FOR UTILIZING THIS PAPER

1. Take the "individual profile of team" on pages 10 and 11.

2. Read the introduction noting the eight problem indicators.

3. Read the problem indicators and conditions which would mean the problems were solved. Pages 3 through 9.

4. Presentation of the team tutorial approach.

5. Break into area teams by discipline.

6. Teams do the following:

   a. Discuss the problem indicators noting areas of disagreement or expansion;

   b. Discuss the model (team tutorial approach) and add/delete;

   c. As a group, fill out the team histogram at the end of this paper and turn into team leader or chairman. This should be arrived at by consensus.

7. Team leaders meet with Mr. Pew to compare the following:

   a. Consensus team analysis on the team histogram compared to:

   b. Mr. Pew's individual averages on the same instrument to note:

   c. Discrepancies between what teachers said individually and what they said in the team meeting. This will provide a check:

   d. On the team's operational functioning and effectiveness and:

   e. A chance to map with the principal specific items for the team's consideration on improvement in the future.